

Remarks

Claims 1-3 remain in the application.

Claims 4-23 have been withdrawn from consideration.

Claim 1 has been amended.

In section 3 and 4 of the Office Action, claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sasaki et al. in view of Kenji et al. and also as being unpatentable over Shimada et al. in view of Kenji et al. Applicant had argued that the references fail to teach or suggest that the limitation "nanolamination" requires a discontinuous layer as per the specification. The Examiner noted that the specification has a broad definition and that "The present claims, therefore, are not limited to discontinuous layers." Therefore, claim 1 has been amended to specifically recite the limitation

"at least a single nanolamination of a material selected from the group consisting of Al_2O_3 , SiO_2 , ZrO_2 , yttria-stabilized ZrO_2 , TiO_2 , HfO_2 , Ta_2O_5 , Si_3N_4 , AlN , B_4C , SiC , Si_4N_4 , Ta, Zr, and Hf; wherein said nanolamination is a discontinuous layer."

Support for this amendment may be found on page 3, lines 9-11. Since none of the references teach or suggest a nanolamination forming a discontinuous layer, Applicant believes that the claim as amended is patentable over the prior art. Since the amendment is believed to put the claim in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to enter the amendment and to reconsider and withdraw the ground of rejection with respect to claim 1. Since claims 2 and 3 are dependent on claim 1, the Examiner is respectfully requested to also withdraw the ground of rejection with respect to claims 2 and 3.

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, Applicant believes that all the grounds for objection and rejection have been overcome and the pending claims are in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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